PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO SCHOOL DISRUPTION AND VIOLENCE

Recommendations and Guidelines of the Vermont Taskforce on School Violence

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Vermont Department of Education
Safe and Healthy Schools

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Edited by Peter W. Thoms

Foreword

We who live in Vermont often boast, with understandable pride, that our rural state is a great place to raise children-a sanctuary from the pace and pressures of urban life. That's why the following recent headlines from Vermont newspapers raise provocative, difficult, and troubling questions.

- "Young and Violent: A Scary Trend"
- "Violence in the Schools: Causes, Prevention, and Crisis Management"
- "Disruptive Special Education Students Get Own School"
- "Take Note: The Gangs Are Here"
- "Parents Insist School Discipline Was Cruel"
- "Bomb Threat at Vermont School"

Such headlines are understandably chilling for us to read. Vermont, after all, has:

- the lowest juvenile arrest rate in the United States
- the lowest rate of juveniles in detention
- the lowest violent crime rate
- the lowest rate for sex offenses, larceny, and car theft.

While the above statistics justify the natural pride we have in our state, we must pay close attention to the realities behind the headlines and face directly the complex challenges that violent and disruptive behavior brings to our schools. The lowest rankings on national crime reports should make Vermonters all the more determined to focus clearly on both prevention of and effective responses to school violence. The achievement of high educational standards, essential for a thriving democracy and economy, will occur only in schools that foster both academic excellence and non-violent social relations.

Last spring, after significant and increasing incidents of violent behavior in Vermont schools, I convened the Task Force on School Violence. Composed of educators, parents, and specialists, the group was asked to develop, using the best thinking and practices available, recommendations and guidelines to prevent and respond to school disruption and violence.

The Recommendations and Guidelines in your hands identify essential elements which school personnel can use to establish a positive school climate and effective discipline. It is a comprehensive, engaging, and practical document. It will be a catalyst for discussion and debate as you wrestle with challenges unique to your school and community.

I am deeply indebted to the capable and committed Task Force members for their contributions. I trust that their report will be useful to teachers, administrators, students, and parents in developing and implementing school discipline policies and procedures.

Marc Hull Commissioner of Education

_ Juvenile Crime Rankings by State, 1997. All citations are from a paper by Peggy Miller, Planning Division, Agency for Human Services.

Introduction

Teachers, parents and school administrators throughout Vermont have collectively searched for a clear answer to the following question: "What do our schools need to ensure the physical, social and emotional safety of all students and staff." While no scientific formula provides the answer, we know what we can do to create a well disciplined school. Just as educators have identified proven methods for teaching reading, mathematics and writing skills, we also know about effective practices that will improve school discipline. But preventing and responding to disruptive behavior, these practices will benefit all students, their families, and staff.

Recognizing the increase in school violence, in May of 1997, Marc Hull invited forty Vermonters, representing a wide variety of backgrounds and expertise, to join a special Task Force on School Violence (see Appendix A). This Task Force brought their knowledge and experience to bear on four overlapping issues that impact our school communities. Specifically, the Commissioner charged the Task Force with making recommendations and drafting concrete guidelines to address the following issues:
1. Identification of ways that schools can prevent and, as necessary, respond to disruptive and violent student behavior effectively and humanely;
2. Identification of the professional development needed for working with disruptive and violent students.
3. Effective use of time-out and planning rooms; and
4. Effective school prevention of, and response to, gangs and gang-like activities.

What follows are the results of the Task Force's efforts to offer guidance to school communities in the above areas. This document is intended to be used as a tool for schools that are striving to increase their capacity to serve students with behavioral challenges in order to benefit all.

For the Task Force,

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I. Creating A Well-Disciplined School

Overview

A clearly articulated, proactive system of school discipline provides the foundation for addressing student behavior. Positive school discipline reflects policies and practices that support the appropriate school structure and climate for students to progress academically. From the student who needs a high level of external behavioral controls to get through the school day successfully, to the student who possesses self-discipline, a well-disciplined school benefits all.

This part of our Recommendations and Guidelines outlines the "essentials" for creating a well-disciplined school. The information offered has been culled from research and experience and is based on the assumption that all of our schools are moving along a continuum. At one end we find disruption; toward the end-point we experience stability and control; and at the far end we achieve a climate of genuine self-discipline.

Values, Beliefs and Attitudes for Effective Discipline

School communities that are successful in managing student behavior and building self-discipline act upon specific values, beliefs and attitudes. These values, beliefs and attitudes pervade the school environment, drive decision-making and are constantly reinforced in a wide variety of ways. They include the following:

1. There are no easy answers (quick fixes).
2. Almost all behavior communicates basic human needs and purposes.
3. Only when we build relationships can we nurture students' capacity to develop constructive, life-affirming values upon which they can base their behavior.
4. Belonging, mastery, independence and generosity define social and mental health.
5. School communities that value and integrate belonging, mastery, independence and generosity into all activities, provide a strong foundation for school discipline.
6. Discipline should be viewed as a set of skills to be learned, an opportunity to problem solve and build community with students/ families, rather than as an opportunity to do something to people for the sake of control and compliance.
7. Prevention of challenging behavior is emphasized. It is stressed even as intervention strategies are used.
8. Meeting the needs of discouraged, at-risk students is a school community responsibility; we all have to be part of the solution.
9. Only those prevention and intervention strategies which preserve the dignity of the student without physical or emotional pain/harm are acceptable strategies.
10. Aggression breeds aggression.
11. A student is more important to us than what s/he does.
12. The provision of services and the use of prevention/intervention strategies must honor human diversity.

13. The development of a continuum of service based on a student's needs should take precedence over a continuum of placement.
14. All adults involved with discouraged, at-risk children must be supported in meeting the needs of these children.

Characteristics of a Well-Disciplined School

(Adapted from, and used with permission of: Johns, Beverly; Carr, Valerie, (1995) Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company)

Positive school discipline combines prevention and response strategies in a well-balanced way. Schools that achieve this balance view discipline as a set of skills to be learned, rather than as something to be done to students. These schools use effective approaches and strategies, including the following:

1. They emphasize, and are successful in fulfilling, students' and adults' needs for belonging, mastery, independence and generosity.
2. All staff are committed to establishing and maintaining positive student behavior as a precondition to learning. The school emphasizes the primary importance of learning and eliminates conditions which inhibit learning.
3. Staff hold and communicate high expectations for positive student behavior.
4. Clear, positively-framed, broad-based rules (developed with input from students) identify specific behaviors, sanctions and procedures that are made known to everyone in the school community.
5. Students experience a welcoming social climate, characterized by concern for them as individuals. Teachers and administrators take an interest in the personal goals, achievements and problems of students and support them in their academic and extracurricular activities.
6. Principals are very visible in hallways and classrooms, talking informally with teachers and students, speaking to them by name and expressing interest in their activities.
7. Principals take responsibility for responding to serious infractions, but hold teachers responsible for handling routine classroom management. They assist teachers in improving their classroom management and discipline skills by arranging for staff development activities and helping them generate a professional development plan that integrates teaching skills with the school's discipline system.
8. Close ties with parents and communities are the rule rather than the exception. Well-disciplined schools have a high level of communication and partnership with the communities they serve. These schools have a higher-than-average incidence of parent involvement in school functions; interagency support and coordination are apparent; and communities are kept informed of school goals and activities.

Behavior Management

(Adapted from, and used with permission of. Johns, Beverly; Carr, Valerie, (1995), Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company)

Behavior management is the term given to the range of responses a school uses to promote positive student behavior. These include the establishment of schoolwide and classroom rules, social skills training for students, and the development of skills the staff uses to maintain a proactive and structured learning environment.

A rich, actively engaging curriculum, combined with a schoolwide system of rules of conduct, forms the foundation upon which well-disciplined schools build high expectations for student achievement. The following elements of behavior management are found in most schools reporting positive school climate and academic excellence.

1. Schoolwide rules include standards of behavior for classrooms, halls, library, lunchroom, bus, auditorium, recreation areas, etc.
2. Teachers consistently respond to appropriate and inappropriate student behavior with the recognition that "fair" means treating people with equal value, not treating everyone in the same way
3. Students regularly review behavioral expectations and consequences for misbehavior. Teachers have a clear understanding of those behaviors that should be addressed in class and those that require the use of schoolwide resources. These resources include, but are not limited to, out-of-classroom staffed space to process behavior (e.g. time-out and/or planning rooms); the availability of well-trained crisis response teams; parental involvement and interagency collaboration; individual behavior management planning; peer mediation and problem solving; school counselor support and access to a behavior specialist.
4. Immediate disciplinary consequences follow serious infractions of school rules (e.g. verbal aggression or threatening behavior, fighting, use or possession of weapons, drugs or alcohol, stealing, destruction of property and repeated violation of less serious offenses) - Some schools employ student courts in which the student's peers judge serious infractions and recommend consequences.
5. School personnel recognize that suspension is not a learning or teaching procedure in and of itself. When used effectively, suspension includes a re-entry meeting among school staff, the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian. At this meeting, they collaboratively seek ways for the student and/or staff member to avoid similar situations or to manage them differently. Suspension is viewed as an unfortunate loss of important instructional/ lean-learning time. For this reason, and the fact that a lengthy suspension is no more powerful than one of short duration, the number of days that a student is out of school is kept to a minimum.
6. Students are held responsible for their actions and are required to make restitution (as necessary and feasible) for inappropriate behavior. Restitution may come in the form of an apology or reparations to the victim(s) of the behavior, such as replacing/ restoring property which may have been damaged as a result of the student's behavior.

Additional Tips for Successful Behavior Management: A Baker's Dozen

(Adapted from, and used with permission of: Johns, Beverly, Carr, Valerie, U 995) Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company)

1. Do not take a student's misbehavior personally.
2. Never force an issue with a difficult student in front of the class.
3. The certainty that a consequence will happen is a more powerful deterrent than the severity of that consequence.
4. Find out what a student does weld and build on it.
5. Avoid sarcasm.
6. Do not label students as "bad" or "sneaky."
7. Do not look for quick fixes; there usually are none.
8. Keep calm.
9. Genuinely praise the class as a group and as individuals.
10. Inform parents of positive as well as problem behavior.
11. Retain a good sense of humor.
12. Build rapport with the group and individual students.
13. Accent the positive.

Responding to Verbal and/or Physical Attacks: The Crisis Cycle and Counter-Aggression

(Note: The following information is based on the work of the Crisis Prevention Institute and Nicholas Long)

A crisis may be defined as a period of social, emotional and/or physical distress which temporarily impairs a person's ability to cope.

A behavioral crisis can involve verbal or physical aggression or both. Ample evidence exists to show that teacher behavior during the early phases of a behavioral crisis can promote escalation to more intense levels, or de-escalation to a calmer state. Research and experience show that the application of day-to-day management techniques (e.g. sending a student to time-out) are not only ineffective, but may actually make the crisis worse,

During a crisis, a student is likely to go through several distinct phases beginning with the verbal or nonverbal expression of anxiety and ending in what is called the tension release or recovery stage. Teacher behavior, from the onset through later phases leading to tension release and recovery, is critical. Most importantly, the adult must fully understand that responding to aggression with aggression only escalates the crisis.

When a student explodes following a reasonable request (e.g. to hand in an assignment), challenges a staff member's authority, is non-compliant, screams obscenities or threatens harm, it is clear that something is very wrong. Although it may be hard to believe, a student who behaves in these ways is extremely vulnerable. Responding with anger, threats, ultimatums etc. displays insensitivity to the student and escalates the crisis to higher levels of intensity and danger. Over

time, such responses (called counter-aggression or righteous rage) cause the student's crisis behavior to increase in frequency, duration, intensity and danger and to become generalized to other environments.

The above doesn't mean that the adult isn't tense, afraid, upset or angry when experiencing a student's crisis behaviors. Rather it emphasizes the need for training and regular practice in professionally responding to such circumstances and behaviors. It is critical to learn how to depersonalize crisis behaviors, know the appropriate interventions at each stage of crisis and remain calm. Police officers, people who work at airline ticket counters and the gift return sections of department stores at holiday time, all learn and practice these skills in order to control their counter-aggression and de-escalate crisis behaviors. As educators, we must learn these skills also. They include but are not limited to the following:

1. Lower your voice.
2. Slow your rate of speech.
3. Stand 1 to 3 feet from a student who is acting out-give the student space.
4. Be aware of your body language and tone of voice.
5. Allow verbal venting.
6. Ignore irrelevant comments; direct the student back to the problem at hand.
7. Provide choices.
8. Use non-aversive physical intervention (restraint) as a last resort.
9. Once the student is calm, use the incident to teach alternative, appropriate ways to deal with aggression.

Summary of Effective Practices

The following list of effective practices summarizes and, in some ways, expands upon the preceding information. Schools that implement these proven methods are effective in meeting the needs of students who exhibit challenging behavior while simultaneously benefiting the entire school community.

Basic Practices

1. Establish strong administrative, school board and community support.
2. Promote family involvement based on fan-family-centered practices.
3. Develop a multi-year strategic plan, based on core values, to which all other plans are connected.
4. Use curricula that address students' needs, interests, and talents.
5. Provide choices for students and families.
6. Develop students' critical thinking, creative problem-solving and decision-making skills.
7. Teach in ways that are engaging, inquiry-based, constructivist and cooperative.
8. Use interdisciplinary learning /teaching.
9. Meet student and adult needs for belonging, mastery, independence and generosity.
10. Develop collegiality through collaboration and the regular examination of learning/ teaching.
11. Foster experimentation, high expectations, trust, appreciation and celebration.

12. Continuously reach out to the knowledge bases impacting learning /teaching.
13. Provide tangible support (i.e., time and resources) to accomplish tasks.
14. Develop a continuum of services vs. a continuum of placement.

Educational Opportunities and Options
1. Social skills, conflict resolution and peer mediation are learned and applied across the curriculum and practiced in real settings.
2. The community is an integral part of the classroom (including service, vocational, mentorship and apprentice programs).
3. Early literacy is emphasized.

School Culture and Environment
1. Students and adults exercise initiative, leadership and decision making in rule-making, educational content, methodology and assessment.
2. Professional development is provided in collaboration and creative problem-solving.
3. Consistent schoolwide behavior response and management systems exist.
4. Crisis prevention, response and management capacity exists.
5. Individual behavior response and management capacity exists.

Family/Community/School Collaboration
1. Home/school coordination is fostered.
2. Parent/ school /community partnerships are developed.
3. interagency coordination/collaboration exists.

Organization and Resources
1. Out-of-classroom learning environments are available.
2. Faculty and staff (including teaching assistants) work in teams for planning and support.
3. Access to behavior specialist(s) is available.

II. Professional Development Opportunities Needed For Working With Disruptive and Violent Students

Successfully implementing the previous strategies requires professional development. This part of our Guidelines outlines what is needed to meet the training needs of school staff. Professional development should be a continuous systematic process that ensures support for new and current school personnel and is fully integrated with ongoing school improvement plans.

When designing professional development plans and opportunities, determining the level of knowledge for each training area is the initial concern. Before engaging in a training event, each staff member must decide what level of knowledge is necessary for the subject and whether the particular activity will achieve that result. The following three levels provide an outline for planning professional development activities.

Level I: Awareness An overview that provides general understanding of basic principles and how to obtain more information.

Level 11: Knowledge A series of connected training events that lead to more complex understanding and the opportunity for initial skill acquisition.

Level III: Mastery Through coaching, action research and/or collegial support groups, etc. leading to comprehensive knowledge and skills; one has "expert" or "proficient" ability to find solutions to problems.

The benefits of many professional development experiences are often not realized because newly-learned skills are not well integrated with overall school improvement plans. Schools that report success in building their capacity to work with students with challenging behavior match staff development with priority areas described in a multi-year plan of school improvement. Each staff member is provided ample opportunity to share new learning, and refine skills through a collegial support network. Most importantly, each newly-learned skill builds both systemic and individual capacity.

With the above framework for professional development in mind, the Task Force on School Violence recommends the following for preventing and responding to disruptive student behavior and encourages schools to link training activities with increased schoolwide planning.

Please note: First determine the level of proficiency each staff member needs in the items listed below; then decide what professional development programs will help them achieve it.

In every Vermont school, all personnel should receive ongoing training in:

1. Understanding the School's Current Discipline Philosophy, Procedures and Practices
2. Distinguishing Discipline from Punishment
3. Understanding the Purposes of Anger
4. Anger Management
5. Understanding Conflict, Crisis and De-escalation Strategies
6. Building Personal Responsibility

In every Vermont school, administrators, teachers and teaching assistants should receive training in:

1. Social Skills/Conflict Resolution/ Mediation
2. Understanding the Cycle of Student-Teacher Conflicts (Counter Aggression)
3. Working with Parents
    • Who are Culturally Different from the Mainstream Population due to Socio-economic Status, Race, Ethnicity, etc.
    • Who are Experiencing Stress
    • Who are Aggressive
    • Who are Cognitively Limited

- Who are in Denial

In every Vermont school, a few key people should receive training in:

1. Children's Mental Health Issues
   - Substance Abuse
   - Sexual Abuse
   - Common Causes and Treatments for Emotional Disorders (e.g. Post Traumatic Stress, Depression, Eating Disorders)
   - Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
   - Divorce
   - Domestic Violence
2. Crisis Management
   - Supportive Physical Intervention
   - Schoolwide Trauma (Death, Suicide)
   - Responding to Others (i.e. students, staff, parents, community members, the media)
3. Behavior Planning
4. When and How to Work with. Outside Agencies (SRS, Mental Health, Law Enforcement, etc.)
5. Legal Issues

III. Effective Use of Time-Out/Planning Rooms

While there are numerous strategies for responding to disruptive student behavior, the use of time-out and time-out/planning rooms has become a particularly widespread practice. Personnel in several Vermont schools have come under fire due to a breakdown in communication with parents and community members regarding the development and use of these procedures and/or because these procedures have not been implemented as intended by their originators. It is for these reasons that the Marc Hull asked the Task Force on School Violence to make policy and practice recommendations concerning the use of time-out/ planning rooms.

Definition of Terms

Time-Out The temporary removal of a student from a (positively) reinforcing environment when s/he demonstrates negative behaviors. This includes:
- Remaining in the classroom away from the group allowing the student to observe the environment; or
- Being in a place, either inside or outside the classroom (but not in a room alone) where the student cannot observe the group.

Time-Out Room The temporary removal of a student from a reinforcing environment when s/he demonstrates negative behaviors, to a room where other students are not present.

Planning Room A place where students can develop solutions with an assigned staff member. Use of this room implies that other interventions were tried in the natural environment and were unsuccessful.

Policy and Practice Considerations (Time-Out Rooms)

1. Use of time-out is a standard management practice. Use of time-out rooms requires strict adherence to the student's rights.
2. Use of time-out exists on a continuum with the use of a separate room at the most restrictive end.
3. A time-out room is different from a planning room as previously defined (although the same space may be used for both purposes).
4. The use of a time-out room should be continually evaluated, by keeping accurate records of:
   - frequency of use;
   - identification of the behaviors that led to the use of time-out;
   - behaviors observed in the time-out room;
   - duration of time that the student was placed in time-out; and
   - level of supportive physical assistance that was used.
5. Other techniques or strategies for teaching alternative behaviors must be available and used prior, and in addition, to using a time-out room. The use of these techniques/ strategies should be documented.
6. Parent and community input should be invited to help develop time-out room policies and procedures.
7. All parents should be informed of the existence and use of time-out room procedures.
8. The use of a time-out room should be reviewed by an objective team at least annually.
9. Use of a time-out room should adhere to all standard safety codes and take into consideration other safety issues including:
   - Availability of, and implementation by, at least two staff who are proficient in de-escalation techniques and the use of supportive physical assistance;
   - The need for adequate ventilation;
   - The need for continuous observation;
   - The establishment of criteria for utilizing supportive physical assistance; and
   - The development of an individual student plan either prior to or following one emergency placement of the student in the time-out room.

Policy and Practice Considerations (Planning Rooms)

1. Protocols must be established (with parent and community input) that specify under what circumstances a student enters and leaves the planning room.
2. Use of a planning room should be evaluated with the same rigor as the use of a time-out room (see number 4 above).
3. After a student uses the planning room s/he should:
   - Have a clearly written plan in place;

- Have the opportunity to meet with a facilitator and the sending staff member to discuss again gain approval of the plan; and
- Expect that all school staff will follow through on the plan as agreed.

4. Student plans should be a way to develop short-term solutions rather than long-term behavioral changes, and therefore, should be time- and/or situation-limited.
5. Planning room staff need to be properly trained and supervised.
6. Training should be provided for staff, students and parents regarding the purposes and procedures of the planning room.
7. The planning room should not be used as a temporary holding station or "dumping ground."
8. A team evaluation of the planning room that is student and system centered should occur regularly.

IV. Preventing and Responding To Gangs and Gang-Like Activities

Very few of us think of our Vermont schools and communities as spawning grounds for gangs and gang-like activities. Unfortunately, we are not immune from these influences. In several of our towns and cities the notion that "it can't happen here" has proven to be mistaken. Recognizing this reality and with an eye toward proactively responding to gangs and gang-like activities before they become widespread, Marc Hull asked the School Violence Task Force to address this issue. Due to lack of experience, Task Force members realized they had insufficient expertise to make recommendations in this area. The following information reflects currently available research and practices where gangs and their activities have become all too real.

Due to Vermont's historically homogenous population there have been instances when groups of minority students have been associated with gang activity when they were merely socializing in groups. It must be stressed that gangs are always associated with criminal and other destructive activities. Special sensitivity and awareness needs to be exercised in this area. We must be careful not to mistake the normal socializing of all adolescents with gang participation.

Definition

While there is no standard definition of the term "gang," most experts agree that a gang is a self-identified peer group with a common set of interests and values who do all of the following: come together to socialize; provide support for one another; engage in acts that are destructive and/or violent; and who consider each other family.

Gangs are characterized by leadership that is well-identified, understood and respected. They tend to be very territorial, have been together a long time, adopt symbols and a language of membership, commit crimes and violence in groups rather than individually, defend gang involvement and run the gamut from being well to poorly organized.

Developmental Stages

Gangs generally develop according to fairly well-defined stages. Initially they group together in rebellion against or in defiance of authority and the status quo. At this stage, gang members openly congregate ("hang out"); refer to one another by nicknames; use uncommon but uniform vocabulary and ways of greeting each other; abuse drugs and/or-alcohol and identify themselves by a name and/or distinctive appearance (colors).

Next they merge. At this stage, members participate in what is known as "tagging" (placing their gang name and/or individual nicknames on walls, books, etc.), sport similar tattoos, engage in intimidation and fight with "outsiders" (often accompanied by an increase in weaponry), brag about their exploits and feel marked. In the final stage, all of the above continue and intensify, ultimately leading to the defense of the territory which the gang claims.

Organization

Gangs are hierarchical. "The leader" is often age 40 or over and directs the action of chapters or sections, sometimes from prison. "The traditional," someone in his/her mid-twenties who likely has direct contact with prisons, usually controls chapters or sections and collects gang profits. Beneath the traditional are the "renegades," kids in their mid-teens who function as the strong arm of the gang and who are just as likely to act on impulse as on premeditation. At the lowest end of the ladder are the wannabes or "scavengers," kids seven years and up who make the gang look larger than it is and who can cause lots of difficulties for themselves and others.

What Brings a Gang Together

Gangs attract members by fulfilling some very basic needs. They provide a sense of belonging (this is where I fit in and am accepted); a sense of usefulness (what I do is seen and valued by others); a sense of competence (there is something I can do well) and a sense of control (I have influence and power over the things that affect me).

These needs go unfulfilled as a result of numerous factors from economic hardship and family demographics to the desire for excitement and companionship. These unmet needs and the factors that cause them create gangs. Likewise, they provide the keys to undoing gangs.

Gang Prevention and Response: What Works

One Vermont Community's Experience

When the St. Johnsbury Police started seeing a new group of young males on their streets, they quickly identified members of a gang from Massachusetts recruiting local at-risk youth. They looked at both the attraction of the gang (smooth talk and a caring approach) and at how other communities had responded. They began an awareness program which led to the formation of a Community Alliance. The Alliance held a public meeting to discuss the problem and intervention strategies. Approximately 200 people attended the meeting where groups discussed community

outreach, recreation, public awareness and other issues. Public and media involvement and police response let citizens know that the community would not stand by and let the gang take over. The demise of the gang began when its leader was sentenced to jail and kids began talking of the gang and its members in negative terms. Today there is no gang presence in St. Johnsbury, but the police and other community members remain vigilant for any reappearance.

Prevention

A) What schools, with necessary assistance from others, can do:
- Involve the school community in open discussions of violence and gangs; include law enforcement, parent and religious groups, social services and mental health agencies and business organizations
- Listen to students, be observant of changes in children and the community; educate parents on signs of gang membership
- Support early literacy
- Adopt policy on permitted school organizations and their right to meet on school property
- Provide conflict resolution and mediation training Provide resiliency training for all students, staff and families
- Provide drug and alcohol abuse education /prevention
- Provide violence prevention training
- Establish law-related education programs
- Start "Scare Straight" programs
- Establish middle school leadership and personal development programs
- Provide fine and applied arts and crafts programs including photography, drama, and dance
- Develop well-conceived and clear school discipline systems including school bully-proofing

B) What others in the community, with schools, can do:
- Establish a youth service corps
- Provide teen abstinence and pregnancy prevention training
- Provide parent effectiveness and family skills training
- Plan for permanent placement of foster children
- Provide family life education for teens and parents
- Provide run away homeless youth services
- Initiate family programs /outings
- Provide apprenticeship, career youth development and job readiness programs
- Establish community "Watch Dog" programs
- Establish graffiti and drug free zones
- Initiate community planning (e.g., neighborhood recreation programs, after-school programs, block parties, cook outs, sports activities, etc.)
- Institute Head Start programs
- Establish Boys and Girls Clubs, Scouting, 4-H Clubs, etc.
- Provide mentorships

- Provide adventure education
- Provide summer camp opportunities for children

Intervention
- Establish teen and parent support groups
- Provide family crisis intervention services
- Establish a referral system Establish surrogate families, family crisis program
- Adopt a local media policy that no gang will be referred to by name
- Ban gang dress in school
- Closely monitor and keep to a minimum authorized school entrances and exits, lock other doors from the inside
- Require school visitors to report to the office and to wear a name tag
- Treat gang members as individuals when disciplining them; focus on behavior and avoid giving the gang attention
- Consult with or employ a gang intervention worker

Parent Tips
- Spend time with your child
- Talk to your child about outside influences
- Be aware of changes in your child's personality and selection of friends
- Be consistent in the treatment of your child
- Know your child's friends, their first and last names and where they live
- Talk to the parents of your child's friends, find out what their rules are, make some rules together
- Plan and conduct regular family activities
- If gangs are active in your community, discuss them as a family, find out how your child feels about gangs, don't lecture-listen
- Watch for gang insignias on any of your child's books papers or clothing; if your child wears the same color combinations or changes something even as simple as the way s/he ties his/her shoes, check it out
- If your child is bordering on being recruited into a gang or is already a gang member, get help immediately before your child becomes a statistic (e.g., call your local school, religious organization, social service or law enforcement agency for resource information)

Appendix A
School Violence Task Force Membership Listing

Appendix A is not included with the PDF version of this document.

Appendix B
Professional Development Descriptions

Crisis Prevention and Management (CPM)
Vermont Department of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2501

> **NOTE: Links to information about CPM may now be found on the Vermont Department of Education's Safe Schools Web page at http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm_safeschools.html.**

Crisis Prevention Institute (see page 18 for a description)
3315-K North 124th Street
Brookfield, WI 53005
800-558-8976

Life Space Crisis Intervention (see pages 19-21 for a description)
226 Landis Road
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301-733-2751 1

Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI)

Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (CPI) is a safe, non-harmful behavior management system designed to help human service workers provide for the best possible care and welfare of children who become out-of-control or assaultive. CPI teaches nonverbal and verbal strategies to prevent and de-escalate verbal acting-out behaviors, personal safety techniques to avoid client and staff injury, therapeutic physical intervention techniques using the team approach in physical control and restraint, and strategies in therapeutic post-intervention.

Through the BEST Initiative, the Vermont Department of Education has supported 25 teachers and direct service providers to become certified as trainers-of-trainers through the Crisis Prevention Institute. As a result, approximately 400 educators, parents and direct care staff from throughout the state have received this training.
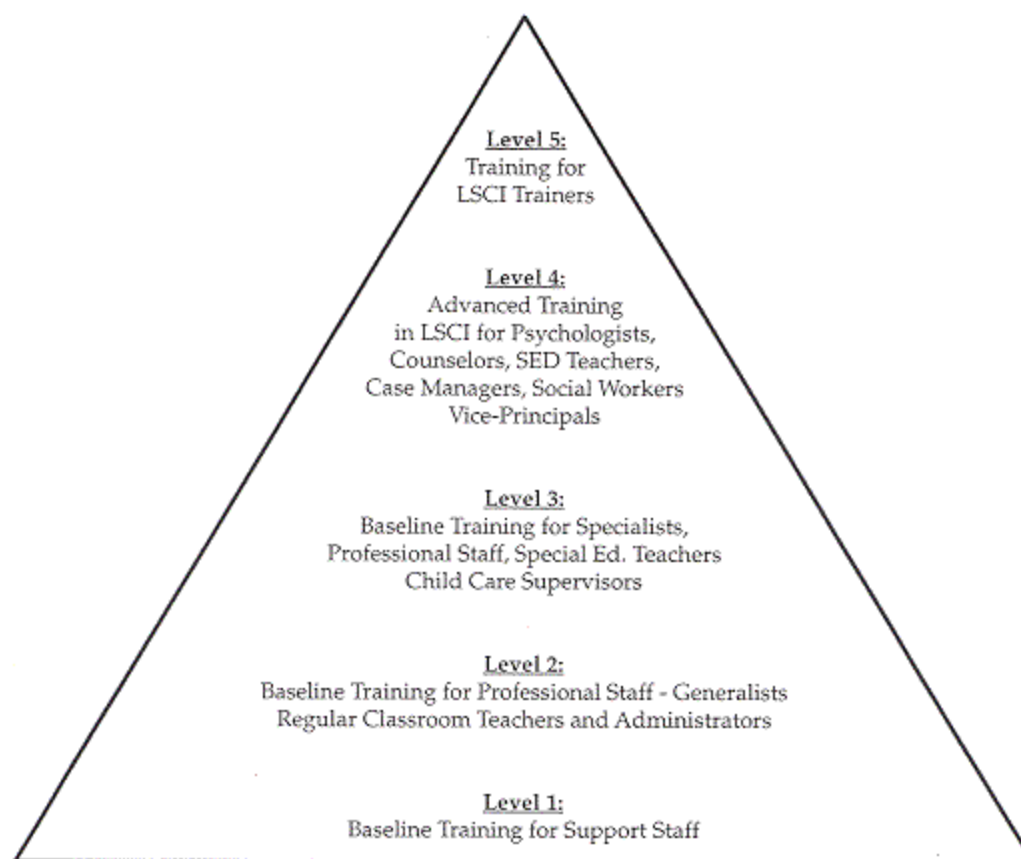
Anyone interested in receiving this 8-12 hour course can contact Sherry Schoenberg at 802-229-4554 or Ken Kramberg at 802-295-8638.

The Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute's Behavior Management Training Model

Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) is a set of strategies which involves talking and relating to "at risk" and "troubled" students while fostering trust, respect, accountability and behavioral changes. It provides some insights and skills into students' patterns of self-defeating behavior, teaches staff how to soothe hot student feelings instead of inflaming student anger, and promotes better student/staff relationships and personal responsibility.

Beginning in July 1998, Vermont will have twenty-five LSCI Trainers (Level 5) available to school districts to provide in-service training.

The LSCI institute is founded on the following competency based hierarchical training model for staff working with "at risk" and "troubled" children and youth. Diagram 1 describes the five levels of the training model, beginning with Level 1 - Baseline Skills for Support Staff to Level 5 - Training Skills LSCI Trainers.

Level 5:
Training for
LSCI Trainers

Level 4:
Advanced Training
in LSCI for Psychologists,
Counselors, SED Teachers,
Case Managers, Social Workers
Vice-Principals

Level 3:
Baseline Training for Specialists,
Professional Staff, Special Ed. Teachers
Child Care Supervisors

Level 2:
Baseline Training for Professional Staff - Generalists
Regular Classroom Teachers and Administrators

Level 1:
Baseline Training for Support Staff

Level 1: Baseline Concepts and Skills

Level 1 consists of the following 7 concepts and skills:
1. The knowledge of the Conflict Cycle
2. The knowledge of staff counter aggression.
3. The skills of anger management and crisis de-escalation.

4. The skill of selecting from the four choices of behavior.
5. The skill of pairing staff intervention with school values.
6. The skills of using planned ignoring, positive talk, disruptive praise, and humor.
7. The skill of using "time-out procedures".

Level 2: Baseline Concepts and Skills

Level 2 consists of all the skills of Level 1 plus the following skills:
1. The skill of establishing group or classroom expectations.
2. The skill of using effective positive reinforcement.
3. The skill of effective warning.
4. The skill of decoding student behavior.
5. The skill of enforcing consequences.
6. The skill of helping an aggressive student.
7. The skill of helping students with ecological challenges.

Level 3: Baseline Concepts and Skills

Level 3 consists of all the skills of Levels 1 & 2, plus the following 10 skills:
1. The skill of preparing an ecological assessment of the student and family.
2. The skill of effective use of behavior modification strategies.
3. The skill of teaching pro-social skills
4. The skill of promoting positive group cohesion and group behavior.
5. The knowledge of cognitive theory-irrational beliefs.
6. The skill of identifying and helping withdrawn students.
7. The skill of identifying and helping passive aggressive students.
8. The skill of identifying and helping hyperactive students.
9. The skill of identifying and helping depressed students.
10. The skill of identifying and helping suicidal students.

Level 4: Advanced Training Concepts and Skills

Level 4 consists of all the skills of Levels 1, 2, and 3 plus competency training in Life Space Crisis Intervention.
1. The skill of completing a certification program in LSCI.
2. The skills of diagnosing the six clinical patterns of self-defeating behavior.
3. The ability to implement the six different clinical interventions successfully.

Level 5 Training Concepts and Skills

Level 5 consists of all the skills of levels 1,2,3, & 4 plus training to become a LSCI trainer. This is the most advanced level of training. Trainers will demonstrate the skills of teaching LSCI based on the professional standards of the Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute.

Resources for the Five Levels of the LSCI Training Model

1. The primary resource for all the concepts and skills for training Levels 1, 2 and 3 can be Conflict in the Classroom: The Education of at Risk and Troubled Students: 5th ed., Long & Morse, Pro-ed, Austin, Texas, 1996. 596 pp.
2. All the concepts and skills for training at Level 4 can be found by reading Life Space In Intervention, Wood and Long, Pro-ed. Austin, Texas 1991, 325 pp., viewing the LSCI Video Seri and Series, NAK Productions, Baltimore, Maryland 1996, and by completing and LSCI Intervention Program.
3. Level 5, Training to Become a Senior LSCI Trainer, is by invitational request. Five and six day certification programs in LSCI are offered by the Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute information call 301-733-2751 or write The Life Space Crisis Institute, 226 Landis Road, Hagerstown, MD. 21740.

Prepared by Nicholas Long Ph. D. and Frank Fecser Ph. D.
The Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute
226 Landis Road, Hagerstown, MD 21740
301-733-2751
1997

Appendix C
Additional Resource Information on the Use of
Time-Out, Planning Rooms and Supportive Physical Intervention

Questions and Issues to Consider for Including a Student with Behavioral Challenges in the Regular Classroom or School

A Guide for Educators, Families and Students
Prepared by the BEST Training and
Technical Assistance Team

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January 1995

The following guide has been developed to assist educators, families and students in determining and ensuring that a student who exhibits behavioral challenges is placed in the most beneficial learning environment. Educators, families and students should discuss the answers to the following questions/issues together. It is important to remember that a student should only be excluded from the regular learning environment if his/her needs cannot be met when provided with supplemental supports and aids. Students should not be denied access to the regular classroom based on categorical disability lab needs for individualized curriculum and/ or instruction within the regular classroom or his/ her specialized supports.

Questions and Issues to Consider for Including a Student with Behavioral Challenges in the Regular Classroom or School

1. What do you want to have happen for this student? What is your vision? What is vision?
2. What needs do you think the student is communicating through his/ her behavior (e. g., belonging, mastery, independence, etc.)?
3. What specific prevention strategies have you used to include the child in the regular setting?
4. What are the student's present levels of performance and needs relative to:
    A. Academic or educational outcomes and learning characteristics;
    B. Social development; and
    C. Physical development?
5. What tools and information have been used to reach these conclusions?
6. What are the student's health and medication needs?
7. Are the student's educational needs specifically and clearly identified with regard to determining the least restrictive placement for him/ her?
8. What assessments have been used to determine factors across environments that are currently or historically contributing to the student's behavior?
9. Is an individual plan (i.e., special education, 504) in place? Are the accommodations being carried out?
10. What accommodations have been identified (e.g., curriculum and environmental modifications) to enable the student to be present in the regular education setting? Describe how they are carried out (i. e., by whom, when, where, etc.).
11. What instruction and accommodations are being provided to help the student develop positive social skills?
12. How have you assessed the effectiveness of the accommodations/ interventions which have already been implemented? What documentation exists?
13. How can supplementary aids and services be provided in the regular education setting? How will ongoing evaluation and needed modifications be conducted?
14. How has the team used outside resources (e.g., mental health, SRS, alcohol and drug services)?
15. In which regular educational settings and/ or situations is the student more successful? are the factors/ elements that contribute to the student's success? How can you capitalize on these factors?
16. What unique benefits (social, academic or otherwise) will the student receive in the regular education setting?
17. How do the student's peers benefit from the child's placement in the regular education setting
18. What support are staff and family members receiving to help them cope with the stress factors associated with the student? How are they taking care of themselves?
19. What kind of training have you received in the use of positive behavior management and discipline techniques?
20. Is there a crisis response/ helping team for the student and/ or the school? Who is on it?
21. Will the student's placement in the regular education setting (even with or because of the

use of supplementary aids and services) negatively impact on the education of other students, taking into consideration:

    A. Level/frequency of disruptive behavior;

    B. Teacher time devoted to meeting the student's needs at the expense of other students;

    C. Need for extreme curriculum modifications?

22. If the answer to question #20 above is "yes," then what can be done to lessen or eliminate the negative impact on others?

23. What is your school policy governing the placement of students outside the regular education setting?

24. How has the student and his/ her family and/ or advocate been involved in the placement decision-making process and plan development in an ongoing fashion?

25. Does the child and his/ her family and/ or advocate support placement outside the regular education setting?

Sample Procedural Statement on the Use of Time-Out as a Management System

Source: Johns, Beverly; Carr, Valerie, (1995) Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company

I. Philosophy

Time-out from positive reinforcement has proven to be both a widely used and effective technique for suppressing the rate of inappropriate behavior. Time-out procedures have been successfully applied across a variety of behavior problems, situations, and populations. However, effective time-out should be individualized to. meet the specific needs of a student as decided by a team decision in a Multidisciplinary Conference or a conference called to develop or review the Individualized Education Program. Appropriateness for age, size, and sex of the student is also a team decision.

II. Definition

Operationally defined, time-out refers to the contingent withdrawal of those reinforcing stimuli thought to be maintaining the behavior of interest.

III. Purpose

The purpose of time-out is to decrease undesired behavior. Time-out from a positive class environment for pre-selected, aggressive, destructive, or individually targeted behavior is an effective method for modifying behavior.

IV. Ethical and Legal Considerations

Since time-out procedures may be misused, the following ethical and legal issues shall be addressed before a time-out procedure is employed.
1. A child will be informed regarding the specific behaviors which lead to time-out for him/her prior to using the procedure.
2. After the child completes time-out, the following options will be made available. Scheduling of these procedures would be a team decision on what is most appropriate for the child.
   a. A chance to clarify his/ her behavior and the time-out consequence.
   b. A chance to identify and practice alternative behaviors.
3. Parents shall be informed about the use of Level 4 time-out procedures as part of the child's behavior management plan.
4. Records documenting the use of time-out, indicating the name of the student, when the procedure was employed and for how long it was employed, are a mandatory practice of the procedure.

V. Levels

Time-out does not automatically refer to removing the child from the classroom environment. Time-out is used with differing levels of isolation. Four levels will be used.

1. **Level 1:** Ignoring the child while leaving him/ her in the same setting.
   Example: The teacher stops reinforcement to the child according to a pre-selected condition.
2. **Level 2:** Having the child place his/her head down at his/her desk.
   Example: The teacher stops reinforcement to the child by having the child put his/her head on the desk.
3. **Level 3:** Placing the child apart or separate from the setting in which the target behavior occurs, but within the regular classroom.
   Example: Sitting in a corner or isolated in a study carrel.
4. **Level 4:** Placing the child in a time-out room. The time-out room meets the following minimum qualifications.
   a. Constructed of materials accepted as fire safe by the district or institution. Materials need to be of the same fire-safe materials as used in other parts of the building.
   b. At least four-feet by four-feet floor space with minimum seven-foot ceiling.
   c. Properly lighted.
   d. Properly ventilated.
   e. Free of objects and fixtures with which children could harm themselves.
   f. Having the means by which an adult can continuously monitor, visually and auditorily, the child's behavior.
   g. Unlocked or no door at all.

V1. Parameters

The following conditions will be adhered to when using time-out procedures:
1. Carried out in a matter-of-fact and calm manner.
2. Must occur as an immediate consequence when a predefined misbehavior occurs. To maximize opportunities to exercise self-control, the student should be given the opportunity to take his/her own time-out after receiving the instruction from the teacher. However, if the student refuses to take his/ her own time-out or if the student fails to respond to the teacher's instruction within a reasonable time interval of 5 to 10 seconds, the teacher should physically remove the student to the time-out area. For high intensity behavior such as kicking, screaming, etc., the student should be immediately escorted to time-out. (It is important that teachers realistically evaluate their ability to physically remove a child to the time-out area. If a pupil is able to break away, the teacher will require assistance.)
3. Accompanied with brief or no discussion, e. g., "Johnny, you cannot stay in the classroom when you _____" or "Because you _____, you must go to time-out for _____ minutes."
4. Be of brief duration. One to five minutes generally is sufficient. It is doubtful that time-out periods exceeding fifteen minutes serve the purpose for which they were intended.
5. Provide for release from time-out contingent upon the student's behavior while in time-

out. A change-over delay procedure of one minute (i.e., a contingency for release from time-out of one minute in which no inappropriate responses are omitted) will avoid reinforcing a child's inappropriate behavior while in time-out.

6. Records, as per Section IV. D., should be kept of each occasion when time-out is implemented and should include the following information.
   a. The child's name.
   b. The episode resulting in the child's placement in time-out.
   c. The time of day the child was placed in time-out.
   d. The time of day the child was released from time-out.
   e. The total time in time-out.
   f. The child's behavior in time-out.

VI. Considerations

The multidisciplinary team will evaluate the effectiveness of time-out procedures for each individual child.

Sample Time-Out Record

Source: Johns, Beverly; Carr, Valerie, (1995) Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company.

Student's Name	School
File Number	
School Year	Teacher

DATE	INCIDENT	TIME IN/ OUT	BEHAVIOR IN TIME-OUT

Sample Procedural Statement for the Use of Safe Physical Restraint

(Source: Johns, Beverly; Carr, Valerie, (1995) Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company)

Related to Physical Safety of Staff and Students, Severe Behavior Disorders Program

I. Definition

Safe physical restraint is adult physical intervention to hold the student until he or she is calm by exerting physical control that is humane, calm, and, to a large extent, not painful.

II. Purpose

The purpose of safe physical restraint is to prevent a student from self-harm or harm to others and to assist a student who cannot regain self-control after becoming physically aggressive.

III. Ethical and Legal Considerations

The student will be informed by the teacher regarding specific behaviors which may lead to physical restraint prior to using the procedure. After a student has been restrained, the following options will be made available:
1. A chance to clarify his/ her behavior and the safe physical restraint consequence.
2. A chance to identify and practice alternative behaviors through the use of life space interviewing.

Parents shall be informed through the Multidisciplinary Conference and/or the Individualized Education Program Conference about the use of safe physical restraint as part of the child's behavior management plan.

Records documenting the use of safe physical restraint shall be kept by the teacher. Records shall include:
1. Student's name.
2. The episode resulting in the use of physical restraint.
3. The length of time physical restraint was used.
4. The child's behavior during restraint.
5. The child's behavior following restraint.

IV. Usage

Safe physical restraint may be used with the following situations:
1. When a student exhibits life threatening or physically aggressive behavior to himself or others.
2. When the administration and staff considers the student's behavior extremely disorderly so as to possibly lead to harming the student or others. Some examples include situations in which a student is physically unable to cooperate with staff, such as running through

the hallway, hitting classroom windows or doors without stopping, throwing objects or furniture without stopping, or continuing to damage school equipment or furniture.

V. Procedures for Use of Physical Restraint

- All staff will be trained in the techniques of safe physical restraint.
- The situation will be handled in a matter-of-fact and calm manner.
- The teacher or adult in charge should first involve the student in conversation designed to calm the student and extinguish physically aggressive behavior.
- The teacher or adult in charge should initiate physical contact, when appropriate, such as "hand on shoulder" while instructing the student in a calm manner to report to the quiet room or designated area or to stop the inappropriate behavior.
- When additional adult assistance is needed, at least four adults should be involved in the encounter to insure the safety of the staff and the student. One adult will direct the encounter. Usually that adult will be the behavior specialist or teacher.

The following steps will be taken when using safe physical restraint:
1. To maximize opportunities to exhibit self-control, students will be given the opportunity to stop their own behavior with a verbal comment/ warning from the teacher, which will also give the student options of appropriate alternative behavior.
2. If the student fails to respond within a reasonable time interval of 5 to 10 seconds, the directions will be repeated and the student will be notified that if he does not cooperate he will be physically restrained or removed from the situation.
3. One adult will direct the encounter. Safe restraint methods will be employed to restrain with one adult holding each leg and each arm. The student will be held until he is calm and under control.
4. Once the student is calm the adult in charge will talk calmly with the student to help him/her.
   a. Identify the student's feelings that led to the inappropriate behavior.
   b. Identify the inappropriate behavior and its consequences.
   c. Identify appropriate behaviors and consequences for use in similar situations.
5. Duration of restraint will be only as long as necessary for the student to become calm.

VI. Considerations

The multidisciplinary team will evaluate the effectiveness of safe physical restraint procedures for each individual child.

Vermont Department of Education

Sample Police Incident Report

(Source: Johns, Beverly; Carr, Valerie, (1995) Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company)

INCIDENT REPORT / STUDENT: _____

FILE # _____

DATE _____

J. arrived at 8:30 a.m. from his bus. Mr. D. saw J. hit N. in the back of the head as J. walked toward school from the bus. As J. entered the school he began yelling. His teacher, Mrs. R., came to the door. She spoke with J. and offered time-out as a means to get calm. J. stated that he could follow the class rules and showed Mrs. R. his white slip from the bus. (The driver did not see the hit as J. left the bus; Mrs. R. did not know about the hit at this time.) J. went to class.

Mr. D. told Mrs. R. that he witnessed the hit as J. got off the bus and it was determined that J. should go to time-out. Mrs. R. asked J. to go to time-out. Although he complained, he walked on his own and remained calm while facts were being gathered.

Mrs. C. spoke with J. He denied any problems on or off the bus. She explained that Mr. D. had witnessed the incident and saw J. hit N. in the back of the head. At this time J. was sitting in the back of the time-out room, and Mrs. R. and Mrs. C. were standing at the doorway of the room facing J. Mr. D. stepped behind Mrs. R. and Mrs. C. J., who had been calmly sitting, saw Mr. D., lurched forward, and began screaming and yelling. He stated that he did not touch N., that everybody picks on him, and that he did not do anything. He suddenly ran toward the doorway, lunged out, and punched Mr. D. in the chest. He intentionally raised his middle knuckle to intensify the punch. Mrs. R. and Mrs. C. held his arms and began to pull him backward off Mr. D. and into the time-out room. Mrs. W. heard the yelling and came into the room to assist. J. kicked her in the chest with all his strength and knocked her into the wall and onto the floor. J. was then restrained on the floor. However, he tried to head-butt Mrs. R. repeatedly. Mrs. C. held his head. At that time he tried to bite Mrs. C. The entire incident took place in one minute or less. However, even after the incident, J. continued to make threats to kill or hurt Mr. D.

J. became somewhat calm after about three to five minutes of restraint. He was released, and the Jacksonville Police were called. Probation was notified. Officer B. came to the school, and J. was taken to the Jacksonville Police Station. I spoke with Mrs. P., the juvenile probation officer, and J.'s parents were notified.

Mrs. W. went to Passavant Hospital. Upon examination she was found to be badly bruised in the chest and back. The doctor prescribed Tylenol with codeine. She was also advised to rest at home for at least two days.

Signed: (Teacher; Adults involved)
cc: Officer Brown, Jacksonville Police Dept.
C. Pete Fish, Morgan County Juvenile Probation
Morgan County State's Attorney
Master file/Teacher file

Vermont Department of Education

Sample Physical Restraint Record

Source: Johns, Beverly; Carr, Valerie (1995) Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company.

Student's Name	School
File Number	
School Year	Teacher

DATE	INCIDENT	TIME	PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Sample Incident Report

Source: Johns, Beverly; Carr, Valerie (1995) Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students, Love Publishing Company.

Student's Name	File Number	Date
Age	DOB	Address
Parent/ Guardian		
Victim		
Adult Witness(es): Name/ Position		
Date/ Time of Incident	Location of Incident	
Type of Incident		
Injuries/ Damage		
Object of Incident (assault, theft, etc.)		
Method (Hit with fist, threw object, etc.)		
Officer Involved		
Narrative (Write exactly what student and victim said or did during the incident, give spec details of incident.)		

Report made by	
Position	Date
School	School address

Essex Town School District
Parameters For Teams When Using Time Away

- Time away (TA) is a procedure to help the student reflect on and plan to change his or her behavior.
- Time away is for those times when a student needs a quiet, safe, supervised space to calm down; to break a cycle or pattern of thinking or responding; or when the safety of the student or other students is at issue.
- Time away is not intended to be an intervention to change behavior. Using it this way is punishing. We need to use teaching strategies to help students change their future behavioral responses.
- Time away should be used as a guided choice.
- The prompt/ decision should never be stated in a threatening way but as a matter of fact guided choice.
- Time away should always be followed with a team member processing the situation with the student.
- Time away can occur in a variety of spaces (in and out of the classroom) depending on the student's needs.
- Consider levels of restrictive ness for implementing time away procedures (i. e., at desk, in classroom, in a separated designated space outside of the classroom).
- Any of the options exercised above must be supervised at all times.
- The above are considered accommodation strategies which could be used with all children in need of brief time away (i. e., a student who sometimes needs a quiet space to complete work).
- Formal time away procedures should be documented when the above accommodations are not working, the level of restrictive ness increases, the number of people involved increases, the child appears increasingly unhappy, agitated, discouraged or disruptive, or when the teachers' level of thinking about the child increases.
- When time away procedures are part of an individual student's written plan, teams must follow the guidelines listed below.

A guidance counselor, special educator, and/ or building administrator must be present when teams are developing plans which call for the use of time away procedures. The meeting must include input from parents/ families.

A log of time away occurrences must be kept. The log should include the following information.

Date and time of the intervention.
Who requested that the student have a time away?
Where did the time away take place?
How long was the time away?
What events/ circumstances surrounded the behavior?
What was the student's frame of mind that day?
What was teacher/ adult frame of mind that day?

What specific behavior resulted in the need for time away?

How was the incident processed with the student and by whom?

Parent contact made by/ on what date?

Parents will be notified by the end of the day when time away procedures outside of the classroom setting are implemented.

Student plans should be developed with parent and student input.

Student plans should be reviewed at least monthly by the team, including the student and parent.

- The dignity of the student will be retained when time away procedures are used.
- The use of time away is not intended to be a humiliating experience for the student.

TA Log

Student Name	Classroom Teacher
Case Manager	Today's Date
Date of Intervention	
Time of Intervention	
TA initiated by	
Length of TA	
Location of TA	
Events/ circumstances surrounding the behavior	
Student's frame of mind	
Teacher's/ adult's frame of mind	
Specific behavior causing need for TA	
How/ who processed with student	
Parent contact made by _____ on _____	

Essex Town School District
Parameters for Teams When Considering the Use of Physical Intervention

- Supportive physical intervention (SPI) will be used only in situations where the student presents an imminent danger to self, others, or property. When such an intervention is necessary, at least two staff members must be present. When this is not possible, staff members must make every effort to get additional help as soon as possible.
- SPI will be used in ways which maintain an individual's dignity. Privacy should be ensured whenever possible.
- The focus of the efforts and interventions should be on the use of de-escalation strategies.
- All staff members are responsible for the safety of others in the building. Only those who have documented training in the use of de-escalation strategies and the use of SPI may implement SPI. Only those physical interventions recognized as safe and effective by the district may be used. In the rare situation where a trained staff member is not available, staff members should use common sense to ensure the safety of all present.
- Processing for the student and the adult(s) involved must occur following the use of SP, no later than the end of the school day. A follow up team meeting will be scheduled within 48 hours after the use of SPI.
- When SPI procedures are part of an individual student's written plan, teams must follow the guidelines listed below.

    - A guidance counselor, special educator, and building administrator must be present when teams are developing plans which call for the use of SPI procedures. The meeting must include input from parents/ families. Students will be given an opportunity for input as appropriate.
    - A log of SPI occurrences must be kept, with a copy provided to the building administrator.
      The log should include the following information.
    - Date and time of the intervention.
    - Who initiated the SPI?
    - How long was the SPI?
    - Who participated in the SPI?
    - What specific intervention was used? (i. e. basket hold)
    - What events/ circumstances surrounded the behavior?
    - What was the student's frame of mind that day?
    - What was the teacher/adult frame of mind that day?
    - What specific behavior resulted in the need for SPI?
    - What was the student's frame of mind that day?
    - What was the teacher/adult frame of mind that day?
    - What specific behavior resulted in the need for SPI?
    - How was the incident processed with the student and by whom?
    - Date/ results of follow up team meeting.
    - Parent contact made by/ on what date?

- All efforts will be made to notify parents within one hour after the use of SPI.
- Individual plans should be reviewed at least monthly by the team, including the student and the parent.

SPI Log (LOG # _____)

Student Name	Classroom Teacher
Case Manager	Today's Date
Date of Intervention	
Time of Intervention	
SPI initiated by	
Length of SPI	
Staff participating in the SPI	
Specific intervention used	
Events/ circumstances surrounding the behavior	
Student's frame of mind	
Teacher's/ adult's frame of mind	
Specific behavior causing need for TA	
How/ who processed with student	
Date/ results of follow-up team meeting	
Parent contact made by _____ on _____	

New York State
Policy and Guidelines On The Use Of Time-Out Rooms

The State Education Department recognizes that behavior management practices for students sometimes include the use of time-out rooms. It is the policy of the State Education Department that each school which uses a time-out room as part of its behavior management approach should include in their school conduct and discipline policy (8NYCRR100.2) procedures to ensure that the use of such a room is safe and therapeutic for all students. In establishing this policy on time-out rooms the State Education Department is not promoting their use. However, in those instances where an educational agency incorporates separate time-out rooms for behavior management purposes, certain requirements must be met to insure that such rooms represent therapeutic and safe intervention. The information set forth in this memorandum is consistent with the regulations and policies of other State agencies involved in the education of students and is not to be interpreted as a substitute for more restrictive requirements of any other licensing or certifying agencies.

A time-out room is an area for a student to safely de-escalate, regain control and prepare to meet expectations to return to program. Time-out rooms are to be used in conjunction with a therapeutic behavior management intervention in which a student is removed to a supervised area in order to facilitate self control or to remove a child from a potentially dangerous environment. A time-out room should only be used in conjunction with a behavior management program which teaches and reinforces acceptable behaviors.

Guidelines for the Use of Time-Out Rooms
It is recommended that the school policy on the use of time-out rooms be developed with parental input, that at least one parent of a student with a disability be included in this policy formation, and that the policy be reviewed annually. Minimally, this policy should incorporate the following components:
- The use of the time-out room in the larger context of behavior management and the school's conduct and discipline policies.
- Location of the time-out room.
- Factors which may precipitate the use of the time-out room.
- Time limitations for the use of a time-out room.
- In-service training for staff on the policies and procedures related to the use of time-out rooms and related behavior management practices.
- Data collection and review of effectiveness.
- Parental rights regarding the use of a time-out room.

IEP Requirements
When the behavior management plan of a student with a disability includes the use of a time-out room, this must be specified in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Data on the use of the time-out room by a student, as described in the "Physical and Monitoring Requirements" section of this memorandum, must be included in the materials reviewed by the Committee on Special Education or Committee on Preschool Special Education.

Parental Rights

Parents must be informed prior to the initiation of a behavioral intervention for their child which will incorporate the use of a time-out room. Upon request, parents must be shown the physical space that will be used for time-out. Each school must provide parents with a copy of its policy on the use of time-out rooms.

Time Restrictions

The amount of time a student will need to be in a time-out room will vary with the student's age, individual needs and behavior management plan. Careful monitoring of the amount of time a student is in a time-out room is required to insure that a time-out room is not being used to the detriment of a student's educational program.

Physical and Monitoring Requirements

A time-out room must include a means for continuous monitoring of the student, both visually and aurally. The room must be of an adequate size (width, length and height) to allow the student to move about and recline comfortably The ceiling height must be consistent with the ceiling height throughout the building. Wall and floor coverings should be designed to prevent injury. There should be adequate lighting and ventilation and the temperature of the room should be within the normal comfort range and consistent with the rest of the building. The room must be clean and free of objects and fixtures that could be potentially dangerous and must meet all local fire and safety codes.

The time-out room must be unlocked and the door must be able to be opened at will from the inside at all times. The use of locked rooms or spaces for the purposes of time-out is prohibited.

To insure a student's safety, staff assigned to monitor the time-out room must be able to see and hear the student at all times. Individual determinations will be necessary to assess a student's need for direct adult supervision in the time-out room.

It is recommended that a time-out log be maintained for each use of the time-out room to monitor the effectiveness of the time-out procedure to decrease specified behaviors. Pertinent information to consider includes the student's name, factors precipitating the time-out intervention, the times the student entered and exited the time-out room, the student's behavior during and upon exit of the time-out room, and the name(s) of the staff member(s) who initiates the time-out room placement, supervises the student during the time-out procedure, and removes the student from the time-out room.

Questions regarding this field memorandum may be directed to Thomas B. Neveldine at (518) 474-5548

Exclusion Time-Out

Exclusion time-out involves removing a student from the potentially reinforcing environment to a setting void of reinforcers. The exclusion setting can range in restrictiveness from an isolated room void of stimulation, classified as isolation time-out by some authors (Mace & Heller, 1990),

to placement in a segregated setting within the classroom (e.g., sitting in a comer or behind a carrel).

Consistent with the philosophy of least restrictive alternative, we suggest the use of the minimum level of exclusion necessary to produce the desired effect. Using a carrel around or near the student's existing seat is advisable if this approach can be used to effectively remove reinforcement. Conversely, if the student is able to attract reinforcement through loud verbalizations, peeking above the screen, or pushing the screen, use of a special room may be required. It is important to note that increasing the degree of isolation does not necessarily increase the procedure's effectiveness (Mace & Heller, 1990).

A room need not be specially designed for the purpose of implementing time-out programs. In fact, the most common practice may be to use a room that has another primary purpose and doubles for use in time-out programming. These accommodations may include: the blind end of a hallway, a closet, an office, a storage room, or the area below a stairwell. Whether designed for an alternative purpose or specifically for use as a time-out room, design features should account for both the safety and effectiveness of the setting.

Principal safety concerns are generally addressed in the life safety codes for educational and social service facilities in the state. Prior to use, a time-out room should be evaluated against criteria in the life safety code or other relevant regulations (e.g., mental health code, school code, etc.). Specific provisions may include:
1. The room should be of adequate size and shape to provide for comfortable access by the student and a staff member.
2. The room should have appropriate lighting and ventilation.
3. It should not be possible to block entries or exits from the room through mechanical means (e.g., bolts, locks, door stops, etc.) that can remain in place in the absence of adult supervision. Courts have held that it is unconstitutional to leave a student alone in a locked room as punishment for disruptive behavior (Morales v. Truman, 1973).
4. Similarly, it should be possible for you to monitor the student without actually being in the room.
5. The room should be free of objects that may be potentially hazardous to an aggressive student (e.g., glass, unshielded light bulbs, electric sockets or switches, etc.).
6. If the student is likely to be highly aggressive and physically threatening to himself and others, the floor and possibly walls should be carpeted or otherwise padded.
7. The doorway should be sufficiently large and unobstructed to allow for the rapid and safe physical guidance of the student into the room during extreme aggressive reactions.
8. Although not an architectural concern, the student should not be deprived of basic physiological- cal necessities while in the time-out room. These include daily meals, water, medication, exercise, and periodic access to a wash room.

Effectiveness considerations are addressed through the following guidelines:
1. The room should be void of all sources of possible reinforcement. Virtually any object can have reinforcing properties under deprivation conditions associated with time-out. Consequently, it is generally best that the room be void of objects other than a chair or

mat. If an office or storage area is used for time-out, objects within reach of the student should be removed.

2. Supervision should be provided through an open door. However, visual contact from student to teacher should be avoided by seating students with their backs to the doorway.

3. To the extent possible, the time-out room should be sound deadened so that the child or youth is unable to draw others in the room by disrupting other students. The ability to draw others into the room may reinforce these outbursts.

4. All responses that may draw a teacher into the room should be anticipated and the room structured accordingly. For example, a child should not be placed in a room with drywall surfaces if the child is likely to kick holes in the drywall.

5. The room should be convenient to the classroom. Some students may need to be physically guided to the room. Consequently, the longer the distance, the greater the possible struggle. Also, time-out is generally recommended for only brief time periods. Therefore, it is advisable to minimize transition time to and from the time-out room.

Adapted from: Applied Behavior Analysis in the Classroom; Patric J. Schloss & Maureen A. Smith, 1994.

Critical Elements and Questions to Consider When Establishing a Planning Room

1. The planning room should exist as part of a school wide disciplinary system. (Where and how does the PR fit in the system? How does the PR promote the goals of the disciplinary system?)
2. Students and staff need to be taught the purposes and procedures of the planning room. (How and when will this teaching happen? How will re-teaching and practice be built into the system?)
3. The focus of the planning process is on present and future behavior and the teaching of strategies which promotes rule-following behavior. Although counseling and academic support may be part of a student's plan, such support should occur outside of the planning room. (How does the planning room offer support/ instruction for the student? How will the system ensure that the planning process remains the focus of the interaction between the student and the planning room teacher?)
4. A space is needed for the planning room. This room should be used only for the planning room and no other purposes. Ideally, it should be removed from the traffic of the school and have enough room to accommodate 3-4 students at one time.
5. The planning room should be staffed throughout the school day. Whether one person or several people work in the room, on-going training and support in developing effective plans, social skills training, anger management, problem-solving, etc. is required. (Who will staff the PR? How will the on-going support and training be made available?)
6. Clearly defined entry and exit procedures for students requiring the planning room must exist. This requires that classroom teachers understand the rationales and goals of the planning room and the planning process. (What are the expectations of teachers prior to sending a student to the PR? How does the student get to the PR? How does the student leave the PR and re-enter the classroom?)
7. Clearly defined procedures in the planning room and procedures for when students do not follow the planning room rules are essential. These should be simple. (What happens when students engage in significant or chronic rule-violating behavior in the P.R.?)
8. Use of the planning room does not preclude the use of other strategies which promote rule-following behavior and reduce rule-violating behavior. (How does the system provide additional problem-solving and planning for students?)
9. Establishment of a communication system between the planning room and classroom teachers to ensure follow-up to student's written plans is critical. (How will adults know what the plan is with a student?)
10. The development of a data keeping system to help evaluate the effectiveness of the planning room for individual students and the program as a whole will facilitate program improvement over time. (How will you keep track of who uses the PR, for what behaviors, for how long and to what end?)

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Gate Keeping and Planning Rooms: How to Prevent the Planning Room From Becoming a Dumping Ground

One of the key variables in determining whether or not a planning room is an effective and productive part of a school's disciplinary system are gate keeping procedures. By gate keeping, we mean how the students get form the classroom to the planning room, what happens in the planning room when the student is not following the planning room rules, and how the student reenters his or her classroom after successfully completing his or her plan.

Schools paying attention to these gate keeping questions, gather and use data from the planning room, and make changes as needed, are those schools which make the planning room functional for students and staff.

Before describing three different gate keeping scenarios a few reminders:
1. Planning is a solution seeking strategy for students. Although having a room to do it in is desirable, it is not required. What is required is trained individuals available to work with the students in a predictable and focused way. Almost anyone can be taught and supported in learning how to do this work.
2. A planning room is not the total system but rather part of a disciplinary system or pyramid. The effectiveness of the planning room or process is directly related to what happens in the classroom prior to sending the child to the planning room and what happens upon the child's return.
3. Remembering that planning is primarily about identifying short term solutions in order to build a student's sense of confidence and mastery of related social skills, anger management, self-control, decision making, etc. It is unlikely that planning by itself will promote long term, lasting change. The larger the constellation of supports, accommodations and interventions available the more likely planning will be an effective strategy.
4. It is not magic, it is not a quick fix, it does not work for all students all the time.

Getting Students to the Planning Room

Option A:
The decision to send a student to the planning room is made by the classroom teacher. In systems that use this procedure, there is usually an agreement that the teacher will have used several interventions prior to sending the student to the planning room. Often, the teacher is expected to have attempted either time-out and/or an oral plan prior to removal. In these cases, the teacher fills out a form indicating the student's behavior. In some schools, (especially at the middle and high school level) the teacher also indicates when s/he would like the student to return to the classroom or when s/he will meet with the student to review the plan (i.e. Send back ASAP, Send back 5 minutes prior to end of class, please have student see me at - so we can schedule a meeting to review plan, must be within 24 hours).

Option B:
The student is sent to the office where an administrator determines whether or not the planning room is an appropriate option. In some schools the teacher indicates his or her preference. As in the above scenario, it is expected that the teacher would have tried several interventions prior to removal. In these systems, it is not unusual for the administrator to actually do the planning with the student, with the understanding that the plan is ultimately approved by the sending adult. A key to making this system work is that an administrator must always be available and have adequate training in the process.

Option C:
In some schools planning room intervention is available by referral only. Before a teacher or a team of teachers and administrators may send a student to the planning room, the individual teacher or team presents a case study to a planning room referral team identifying what they see the student's needs are, what interventions, supports and accommodations are in place and how they see working with the planning room process. A variation on this is planning room referrals are made through a building based support team, or educational support team. The key to this system is whoever is doing the screening must have a solid understanding of what the planning room is and is not. In all cases, someone who works in the planning room on a regular basis is on the decision making team.

Getting Students Back to Class

Regardless of how the student enters the planning room and regardless of how the student returns to the classroom, it is essential to remember that the plan must ultimately be approved by the referring adult, although it is the planning room teacher who gives first approval.

Option 1
After a student has written a plan which appears to be satisfactory, s/he returns to the classroom with the plan and either returns to his or her desk or to a time-out/quiet comer to wait for the teacher to review the plan. It is agreed the teacher will review the plan as soon as possible but certainly within 10 minutes. If the plan is acceptable, teacher signs it and the student rejoins classroom activities. If the plan is not acceptable, the teacher has 3 choices 1) have student return to the planning room, 2) have student stay in quiet comer or at desk and write or modify plan, 3) schedule a time to work with the student to revise plan.

In some schools, the planning room teacher goes with the student to the classroom.

Option 2
Upon completing his or her plan, the student goes to the office where the plan is reviewed by administrator and then returns to the classroom with similar sort of options as described above.

Option 3
The planning room notifies the teacher the student has completed a plan and it is ready for review. The teacher communicates to the planning room one of the following;
1) send the student up right away, 2) please send the student up in 5, 10, 15 minutes, 3) it

doesn't make sense for him to return at this point, please keep till end of period and I will come to PR. to schedule a time to review with student.

The Individualized Option

Because students are almost always smarter than systems, it is safe to assume that in spite of our best efforts to identify and eliminate glitches in the system, at least one student will demonstrate his capacity to out wit the system. Thus, if and as needed, any and all entry and exit strategies may be modified, redesigned, etc. in order to better meet the needs of the student and the situation.

Other gate keeping procedures critical to the system

The Tickler System:

In many schools, after a student has been in the planning room 3 times within a marking period, a letter is sent to the parents explaining their student has been in the planning room three times and to please take some time to discuss how school is going and how they might support their student.

After five visits to the planning room, a meeting is called inviting the teacher, student, perhaps a peer, planning room person, administrator to discuss what is happening and to engage in additional solution seeking, supports, accommodations and conversation of how to make a difference for this student. The purpose of this meeting is NOT TO MAKE THE STUDENT FEEL BAD, IDENTIFY PUNISHMENTS OR TO MAKE THREATS. The purpose is to find solutions.

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Springfield School District Policy on Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention

From: **B.E.S.T. Committee**
To: **School Board Members**

Statement of Need: The demand for safe effective techniques that insure the care, safety, welfare, and security of all involved when managing aggressive and violent behavior has become essential. A safe non-harmful behavior management system with training specifically designed to maintain the care and welfare has been provided by the State of Vermont B.E.S.T. Committee and each district has a trainer.

Subject: **Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention**

Policy: It is the policy of the Springfield School District to use Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention as a behavior management technique. Physical intervention will be used as a last resort when all verbal de-escalation techniques have been exhausted or when individuals present a danger to self or to others. Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention will only be used by individuals who have received training from the trainer and been certified by the Crisis Prevention Institute. Each school will be responsible for forming-ting a trained crisis team to manage situations which require nonviolent crisis intervention.

Appendix D
Building Effective Supports for Teaching (BEST) Children with Behavioral Challenges

For information about the BEST Project,
go to the Vermont Department of Education's Safe Schools Web page at
http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm_safeschools.html.

Look under the section titled "Links to Currently Available Information"